

Chapter

The relative importance of plot and character

Introduction;

Aristotle devises six formative elements of tragedy. From those one is plot, he says it is very soul of tragedy than he makes a controversial statement "A tragedy is impossible without a plot but there may be one without character.

Necessity of plot (character & action)

He says tragedy is an imitation of an action, which travels from happiness to misery. To him, plot did not mean an abstract pattern of action largely independent of the specific character or agent. As in drama characters reveals themselves through their dialogues and action. Therefore, without action, there is no drama at all possible and it must change from happiness to misery to arise pity and fear. Plot and action works in opposition, as plot is made up of events and action by character while character itself is dramatic in nature, which in turn again produces action.

Two aspects of characters; Ethos & Dianoia

Both these elements determine the cause of action as well as quality of action. Ethos is moral element while dianoia is the intellectual element. If a person has a tendency to do well, he is called virtuous and it is realized only through actions. Character is formed through actions and also revealed by it

In Prometheus, speech is step forward in the action. His words are equivalent to deeds. Thus, we find some of Greek plays were not only devoid of intricate plots, but presented an unchanging situation.

In Milton's Samson Agonists speeches are integral part of the action, thus character reveals themselves through actions.

Character is realized through action & thus subordinate to plot

A play is like a living organism. The true significance of the tragedy lies in the plot. In the plot there are the reversal of situations & Discoveries (when hero realize or discover some truth as Oedipus) evokes the tragic feelings. Thus, plot is supreme & character is sub ordinate to it says Aristotle.

Aristotle doctrine & disputes

Which is more fundamental, artistic conception or dramatic structure of the play is basic issue.

Therefore, we like to see the feelings out of which it grows the motivating force of will, which carries out it to end. Thus, audience wants a drama, which in the end will motivate them too. They don't crave only for artistic feature in drama.